

## **Executive Summary** (December 2003)

**Subject:** Internal Review of FLRA's Occupational Safety and Health Program (and related safety and health Federal Requirements.)

**Methodology:** This internal review was performed in compliance with the Inspector General Act and Government Auditing Standards. The scope of this review covered the FLRA Headquarters and all of the regional offices. The review began in May, 2003 and was completed on July 8, 2003.

**Discussion:** The objective of the Federal occupational safety and health program is to eliminate/minimize human injury environmental hazards and productivity losses in the work place. The FLRA issued an internal policy. The FLRA Occupational Safety and Health Program in 1991 which places the responsibility for maintaining safety and health in the workplace for FLRA employees to the Chairman. The Director of Administrative Services Division is responsible for administering the FLRA's Safety and Health programs. The Occupational Safety and Health Act has provided Federal Agencies specific standards as a baseline for effective safety and health programs. The FLRA also created internal policy to comply with Executive Order 12564, Drug Free Federal Workplace. The FLRA has not appropriately implemented this policy. The FLRA has interagency agreements with the Department of Health and Human Services for Health Services and the Employee Assistance Program, and with the Department of Defense for the Computer Electronic Accommodation Program.

Until the September 11 disaster, the FLRA, like many other agencies, did not focus on it's safety and health programs. The FLRA did issue an Evacuation Emergency Plan in April, 2003 but an important item - where to go for the various types of disasters, needs to be added. The FLRA has not provided agency-wide safety and health training, nor has it provided adequate written material to its employees. There are no records showing annual workplace analysis or safety/security inspections, or agency-wide safety and health training. No health and/or safety surveys have been conducted. While the Union of Authority -FLRA contract has a section on safety and health, it does not focus on specific safety and/or health issues relating to employees. Fortunately, the common sense of management and employees have minimized safety and health problems in the Agency.

FLRA's primary health problem, carpal tunnel, may be the result of old furniture which was not made for healthy computer typing. Other vulnerabilities are air quality which affects employees with allergies, and work environment stress which has affected some employee's mental health. The major safety vulnerability primarily pertains to the FLRA Headquarters which did not undergo annual workplace analysis or safety inspections in its former location. Most FLRA employees have had satisfactory health care from the Health Services and good experiences with the Employee Assistance

Program. Over this coming year, the FLRA should focus on the safety and health training of employees and the proper administration of its safety and health programs.